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R.C.M.P.

“AIR”

DIVISION

1937-1973

'LOST' TRAPPER SPOTTED

**First Contact In
Six Wintry Weeks**

NELSON, B.C. (CP)—RCMP said Thursday they may have spotted from the air one of two trapper brothers who have not been heard from in six weeks.

FIRST TRAPPING TRIP

The two Helgren brothers, Cedon 25 and Edward, 23, entered the Duncan river valley 50 miles north

**RCMP'S SURVIVAL SKILLS
KEEP 7 ALIVE FOUR DAYS
AS ARCTIC GALES SHRIEK**

**Plane
Helps Nab
Suspect**

**Fleeing Youth
Spotted From**

The Air

An RCMP aircraft and patrol cars combined Tuesday through radio hookup to apprehend in one hour and 15 minutes a 15-year-old armed holdup suspect at Oak Point.

Police said they were notified at that Horace Clegg, Oak Point farmer, had been robbed.



Canada. Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Dec. 16, 1963

General publications

CG-51

THE EDMONTON JOURNAL, Monday,

Government
Publications

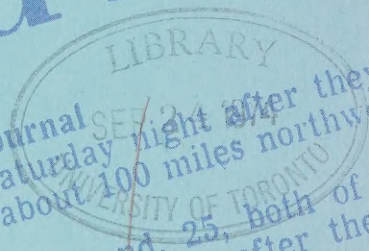
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Police Rescue 2 After 48 Hours By Downed Plane

Special To The Journal
RAE, N.W.T. — Two men were found Saturday night after they spent more than 48 hours beside their downed aeroplane, about 100 miles northwest of Yellowknife. John Shead, 28, the pilot, and Arnuls Steinwand, 25, both of Rae, 50 miles northwest of Yellowknife, were reported in good condition after they were picked up by a ski-equipped RCMP plane. They had spent two days huddled under the canvas engine cover of

RCMP Pilot Rescues Trio From Treacherous Floe





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A History of the
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Aviation Section

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Information Canada

Ottawa, 1973



C.O.'s FOREWORD

Since the beginning of time, man has looked up at the heavens and longed for release from his earthly bonds to enjoy the freedom and advantages peculiar only to flight.

It has been only within this century, that man, suppressing his natural instinct for survival, strapped his body amidst a collection of bamboo, wire and fabric, lowered his goggles and bounded off across that first airfield for his initiation to the world of flight. That modest beginning, covering less distance than the wing span of a modern jet liner at a speed more suitable to the era of horse and carriage than that of the space age was to eventually shrink the world to backyard proportions. It was a beginning that blossomed in the succeeding decades beyond man's wildest dreams and led to the conquest not only of his immediate skies, but of space itself.

Throughout the 1920's and 1930's aviation shed its image of frivolity, gained respectability and began showing that properly employed, flight could be a useful tool in many fields of endeavour.

The R.C.M. Police, comprised at this time of only a few thousand members bringing the rule of law to a nation measured in millions of square miles, was looking to the future, modernizing equipment and law enforcement pro-

cedures. The very size of this large, sparsely populated nation rendered, dog sled, horse, boat and car inadequate to provide the dependable transport network required by a modern and expanding police force. A patrol to or from many of the isolated Police Detachments and the outside world was a long and often hazardous journey requiring weeks of overland travel. It was clear that a faster more dependable mode of transport was required if the Force was to grow with the times.

In May of 1937, the Air section of the R.C.M.P. began operations with four deHavilland Dragonfly aircraft and eight members. Today after 36 years continuous service, the force operates 22 modern aircraft and employs over 80 personnel.

R.C.M.P. aircraft are now a familiar sight from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans and north into the Arctic Islands. The Air Division of the R.C.M.P. has, throughout the years of its existence, won a permanent place within the history of the Force.

Now, as the Force embarks on its second century of operations, is an opportune time to examine the role of the Air Division; the dedication and sacrifices of its members; and the part they played to "Maintiens le Droit."

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "J. H. Reid". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing 'J' and 'R'.

C/Supt. J. H. Reid
February, 1973.
Ottawa, Ontario.

HISTORY OF "AIR DIVISION"

To the average Canadian very little is known of its "Winged Mounties", that is members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police "Air" Division.

The history of the division goes back to 1921 when an R.C.M.P. Sergeant was grateful for an unofficial lift while he was on a trek between Fort Providence and Edmonton, some 750 snow-covered miles.

From that time, close to half a century ago, to the present day the R.C.M.P. has developed an "Air" Division with 22 modern aircraft based at strategic points throughout the nation.

Over the next few pages it's our intention to give the reader an insight into the division's background, its accomplishments, its trials and tribulations, to its present day functions.

* * *

Following the first Great War in March of 1921, Sergeant Thorne travelled from Edmonton

to his northern base at Fort Simpson, N.W.T. in a Junkers aeroplane of the Imperial Oil Company.

He had escorted a murderer to gaol in Edmonton, Alberta. The return trip took four days, but had he travelled overland by dog sled as he had on his journey south, it could well have taken another eight weeks.

It wasn't until 1928, seven years later that the R.C.M.P. needed air transportation to Fort Albany, on the west coast of James Bay to arrest a mentally disturbed Indian. This was the first official request made by the R.C.M.P. for air transportation.

Accordingly, the R.C.M.P. had to make its request through the Royal Canadian Air Force, who in turn notified #2 Photo Detachment, then based at Sioux Lookout, Ontario.

March 1921 —

Sgt. N. Thorne with Imperial Oil's Junkers Aircraft





Fairchild FC-2 — Shediac, N.S.

The late Staff Sergeant A. P. Colfer, N.C.O. in charge of Kenora Detachment made the historic flight, which took a week, to complete even though two flying days were lost due to bad weather. In fact the weather on the day of the patrol was described as "a day fit for flying but unfit for photography". Records show a Fairchild FC-2 aircraft was used for the flight.

In September of 1928, another aircraft was required to carry out police investigations. This time it was the mysterious case of Hornby and his companions who starved to death in the barrens. A coroner was required to visit the scene, so Staff Sergeant M. A. Joyce, a mountie who also happened to be a coroner, at Chesterfield Inlet Detachment, was given the assignment.

S/Sergeant Joyce faced a 500 mile journey down the treacherous Thelon River, and as it was then the middle of September, it was far too

late in the season to complete the patrol by boat.

Hence it was suggested he should lease an aircraft from the Northern Aerial Mineral Exploration Company based at Baker Lake, N.W.T. Unfortunately, he never did get to the scene by air, as the ship he took passage on was wrecked en route from Chesterfield Inlet to Baker Lake. The ship was the property of the N.A.M.E.C., and the aircraft at Baker Lake was required to transport company officials to the scene of the wreck. Whilst engaged in these activities the aircraft was damaged, and the proposed police patrol was abandoned for that year.

Since 1929, Sir James H. MacBrien had been head of the Canadian Flying Clubs Association, together with his DH Moth (which incidentally was the first to bear the new "CF" series of registration – CF-AAA) he became a well-known figure at aviation meetings.

Commissioner James H. MacBrien



It was largely due to Sir James, who was also general manager and director of Canadian Airways, and later in August of 1931 appointed R.C.M.P. Commissioner, that the Force did in fact form its own "Air" Section.

The formation of the "Air" Section was a natural occurrence following a sequence of events that involved a steady increase in demand for Air Support within the Force.

One of the more colourful events of 1932; the celebrated case of the "Mad Trapper", really encouraged the Force to look to aircraft as an integral part of its organization.

The Aklavik R.C.M.P. Detachment engaged in a month-long pursuit for a man by the name of Albert Johnson, and during that period supplies of food and clothing were dropped to the search party from the air by "Wop" May flying a Canadian Airways Bellanca, CF-AKI.

The incident ended with one constable being shot dead and a wounded sergeant being flown to the Aklavik hospital for treatment. The sergeant's flight took only 50 minutes, but by any other means of transportation, including a dog sled, he could well have arrived far too late to save his life.

In the same year, arrangements had been made with the R.C.A.F. to carry out patrols on a regular basis on the west and east coasts of Canada, with regular members of the Force acting as observers. These patrols were initiated to control the widespread practice of rum running between the U.S.A. and Canada and to control the import of narcotics into the country from the Orient.

R.C.M.P. records indicate although ports in Washington and British Columbia were "Closely watched for possible smuggling of American alcohol", no evidence of the traffic was obtained.

Nine seizures were also effected by seaplane observers under the Customs Act, along with twelve deep sea vessels being searched for narcotics . . . "but no seizures were made".

The R.C.M.P. maintained close surveillance on ocean-going vessels arriving from European ports.

The seaplane maintained close contact with the patrol cruiser *Adversus* and with coastal wireless stations. No wireless trouble was experienced throughout the season.

As a result it was felt that aircraft patrols for the year 1936 had been effective in combating narcotic and liquor smuggling into Canada.

Meanwhile, on the Atlantic coast, Preventive Service patrols were being carried out in accordance with Operating Order 12-36 of the Department of National Defence with two aircraft operating from each of the bases at Gaspé, P.Q. and Shediac, N.B. and Dartmouth, N.S. Another craft was held in reserve in Dartmouth.

Flying operations from Sydney, N.S. base were discontinued because of the cost involved, however, the area was covered by patrols from the Dartmouth base.

Late in 1936 the Officer Commanding at Halifax reported that four large seizures of liquor were made after searching aircraft relayed information to land detachments and patrol vessels. The seizures amounted to nearly 2,000 gallons.

No flying accidents were reported throughout the season, although two forced landings were made with no injury to crew or damage to aircraft.

In 1936, Commissioner MacBrien chose to carry out an incredibly long inspection trip by air in an R.C.A.F. aircraft. This trip has been hailed as something of a record as the Commis-



*S/Ldr. E. D. MacLeod (on aircraft)
and Commissioner MacBrien
at Slemon Lake, N.W.T. —
North of Ft. Rae in the
summer 1933*

sioner covered 11,000 miles in one month, with a total of only five days on the ground. This patrol in itself was enough to convince the Commissioner and his associates that aircraft were vital to the Force if widely separated and isolated Detachments were to be linked by a dependable transport system.

Commissioner MacBrien was able to conclude from his trip that the partial control of air surveillance by the Force which had to rely on the assistance of the R.C.A.F. was not completely satisfactory.

The Force received word from the Department of National Defence that it was unable to supply personnel or aircraft for Preventive Service work during the 1937 season. Thus, it was that in 1937 the Force took the first positive steps toward the establishment of an R.C.M. Police Air support system.

Four deHavilland Dragonfly aircraft were purchased and they were received at Toronto by the newly formed Air Section on May 5th, 1937 under the command of Inspector T. R. Michelson.

Downsview, Ontario. Supt. Mercer — C.O. of "O" Division and the 8 original "Air" division members





S/Insp. T. R. Michelson — commissioned 1 June, 1937

Finding crews for the machines was no problem as the R.C.M.P. drew upon men qualified as pilots from the Toronto area. Eight men were eventually selected from the Force's general duty ranks to form the nucleus of the "Air" Section.

The aircraft purchased were registered as CF-MPA, CF-MPB, CF-MPC and CF-MPD. It was at this time that the registration branch of the Department of Transport reserved the "MP" series of registration strictly for R.C.M.P. aircraft.

Left to right: 11302, Sgt. Barker, 8915 S/Sgt. Michelson, 10473 Cst. Hart, Cst. Munroe, Supt. Mercer, 11780 Cst. M. P. Fraser, 10482 Cst. L. Dubuc, Cst. Grant, 12064 Cst. Barnes



Each machine was referred to by the name of a bird, with the first letter of the feathered creature's name being the last letter of the registration. Each Dragonfly was of Canadian type, having an extended fin, and painted patrol blue and odell yellow.

Throughout 1938 flying operations along the Atlantic seaboard were carried out entirely by aircraft owned and operated by the R.C.M.P. "Air" Section. In August of the same year, the Force sold Dragonfly CF-MPD and replaced it with a Norseman (CF-MPE). This was to be the first of two Norsemen aircraft which are said to have given "yeoman service", and which were purchased to serve the requirements of the Force in the Northwest Territories.

When the Norseman arrived on the scene it was hastily sent to the East coast to assist the Dragonflies. It became apparent, after a short time, that the Norseman was effective in nipping smuggling in the bud, as a few months later, having completed 750 hours in 1938, the Force directed the craft to Moncton, N.B. where it operated on its own. The Dragonflies were transferred to Rockcliffe Airport in Ottawa, Ontario, "Air" Section's new headquarters.

In 1939, the Norseman was sent on a flight to Edmonton and it was on its return flight that it suffered an accident on the Sioux Lookout, Ontario airfield. The plane's undercarriage was ripped off, and the airframe twisted badly, resulting in a new registration for the aircraft, being issued after repairs had finally been completed. The registration was changed, at this time, from CF-MPE to CF-MPF.

It was early in 1939 that a hangar was erected for the Force's planes at Rockcliffe, Ontario but about eight months later, after the War started, the Dragonflies were drafted into the R.C.A.F.



Norseman on Cooking Lake, Alberta

for a short spell, before being resold to civilian operators.

Also, the R.C.M.P. pilots, with the exception of one, were assigned to the R.C.A.F. on a full time basis, leaving the Norseman as the only R.C.M.P. craft to carry out integral missions, one of which was destroying gasoline caches around the Hudson Bay area and along the Arctic coast. The caches were destroyed to prevent their possible use by German U-boats and aircraft.

The Norseman was also engaged in tracking down Eskimo murderers in the remote Belcher Islands in Hudson Bay. In 1944, official plans were made to reform the Section. These plans didn't become a reality until 1946.

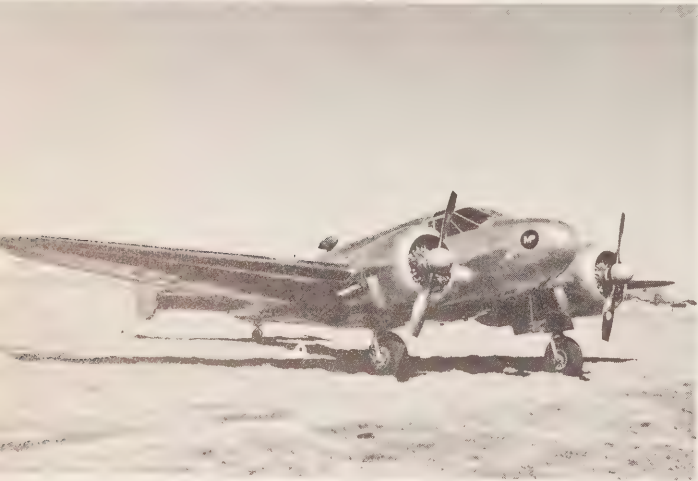
In 1946, three new aircraft of "modern design" were acquired, these being two twin-engined Beechcraft and one Grumman Goose amphibian aircraft. (The Grumman Goose which was war surplus, had 243 hours on it, and was in a sense, a used aircraft.) They were to be used to transport police personnel quickly and for use in conjunction with our Marine Section when required.

Together with the new machines, experienced pilots were being engaged and were put under the direction of Sub-Insp. P. B. Cox, who was fully qualified by training, administrative and other related experience to efficiently and effectively meet our requirements. It must be mentioned that the "Air" Section's officials were grateful to the R.C.A.F. for its assistance in training the crews of the newly formed Division.



C/Supt. P. B. Cox

Beechcraft D18S — March 1946



Grumman Goose — CF-MPG





Rockcliffe, May 1946; Standing, Left to right: 13989 A/Cpl. Mills D. W., 9049 S/Cst. Stewart L. H., 9069 S/Cst. Ruhl B., 9076 S/Cst. Porter W. A., 9028 S/Cst. Phillips K. W.
 Seated, left to right: 14394 S/Cst. Munro L. H., 10880 A/Sgt. Rothwell S. S., S/Insp. P. B. Cox, 11226 A/Cpl. Henderson W., 13548 A/Cpl. Heacock H. A.

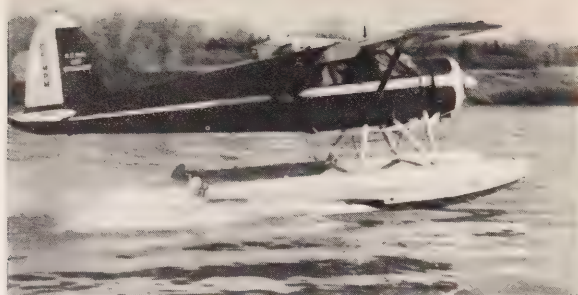
CF-MPK Cornell — Air Division Training Command



The following year, 1947, a Fairchild Cornell was obtained for refresher flying and training purposes. The yellow two-seater was based at Rockcliffe, Ontario, where the Section once more set up headquarters.

At that time the Section consisted of one officer and thirteen other ranks, with a Beechcraft at Rockcliffe, Ontario and Regina, Saskatchewan respectively, a Norseman at Edmonton, Alberta and the Grumman Goose amphibian as a mobile detachment.

Four detachments were located at Regina, Saskatchewan; Edmonton, Alberta; Rockcliffe,



DeHavilland Beaver — CF-MPM, Red River

Ontario and a Mobile Detachment (the Grumman Goose) operating between Winnipeg, Manitoba and Edmonton, Alberta.

When the Section was finally reactivated in 1946, it seemed clear sailing for all concerned. More aircraft were added to the Section, experienced men were added to the ranks and detachments blossomed.

A Stinson Station Wagon, CF-MPJ, was purchased from Curtiss-Reid Aircraft in Montreal in May 1947, and this was capable of flying off skis in winter, and later adapted for floats in the summer.

The floats were added to the machine by the Saskatchewan Government Airways overhaul shop at Prince Albert. This small craft was used to transport prisoners, male and female mental patients and escorts, as well as pathologists, laboratory staff, police dogs and handlers. It even aided in the apprehension of an escaped prisoner.

A second Norseman had been bought in February, 1949 to replace the aging CF-MPF which was later sold by the Crown Assets Corporation.

The new Norseman was a Mark V and registered CF-MPL. This machine served for ten years in the tradition of its predecessor until it was traded in on a deHavilland Otter in 1959.

December of 1949 saw the first deHavilland Beaver delivered to the Force. CF-MPM was based in Winnipeg and it has since seen its share of work. For instance, it was on board this aircraft that a Court was held at Sawbill, near Brochet, Manitoba. This machine was also the first to have notices in the syllabic writing of the Cree language stencilled on it. 'No Push' and similar instructions were applied to tail surfaces to discourage over-zealous natives from hanging too vigorously to sensitive controls.

One of the earliest Beavers to arrive in the Air Section's stable was CF-FHW, known as "Wren". This machine was not registered in the usual

Stinson Station Wagon — Sgt. H. Heacock and Cst. Munroe, 1953



'MP' series, as initially it was owned by the British Columbia Provincial Police, until that organization disbanded; its assets coming under the jurisdiction of the R.C.M.P.

Up to 1950 the character of the Division stayed very much the same and by the end of the year a detachment had been established at Vancouver, B.C. (Beaver CF-FHW having been taken over by the R.C.M.P.)

During this period there was a significant advancement in the qualifications of the "Air" Section members. Two pilots had qualified for Department of Transport Instrument Ratings and two engineers qualified for "B" Category Maintenance Licences.

Other details included the hangar facilities at Rockcliffe being dismantled and replaced to a more suitable location for the simple reason

that they were too close to the flight path of the main runway.

The Commanding Officer "B" Division had indicated by late 1950 that an aircraft would be needed for the Newfoundland area and stated that a helicopter would be most suitable to the terrain. It is interesting to note, as the reader will learn later on in the article, that the first helicopter purchased by the Force was to be based in Newfoundland, indicating that although the wheels of progress sometimes turn slowly they do indeed turn!

"It's a pleasure to report that no flying accidents have occurred throughout the year and no serious ones since the Section started, involving either loss of life, injury to personnel or heavy damage to an aircraft", reads the Commissioner's Report.

Air Detachment — Rockcliffe, Ontario



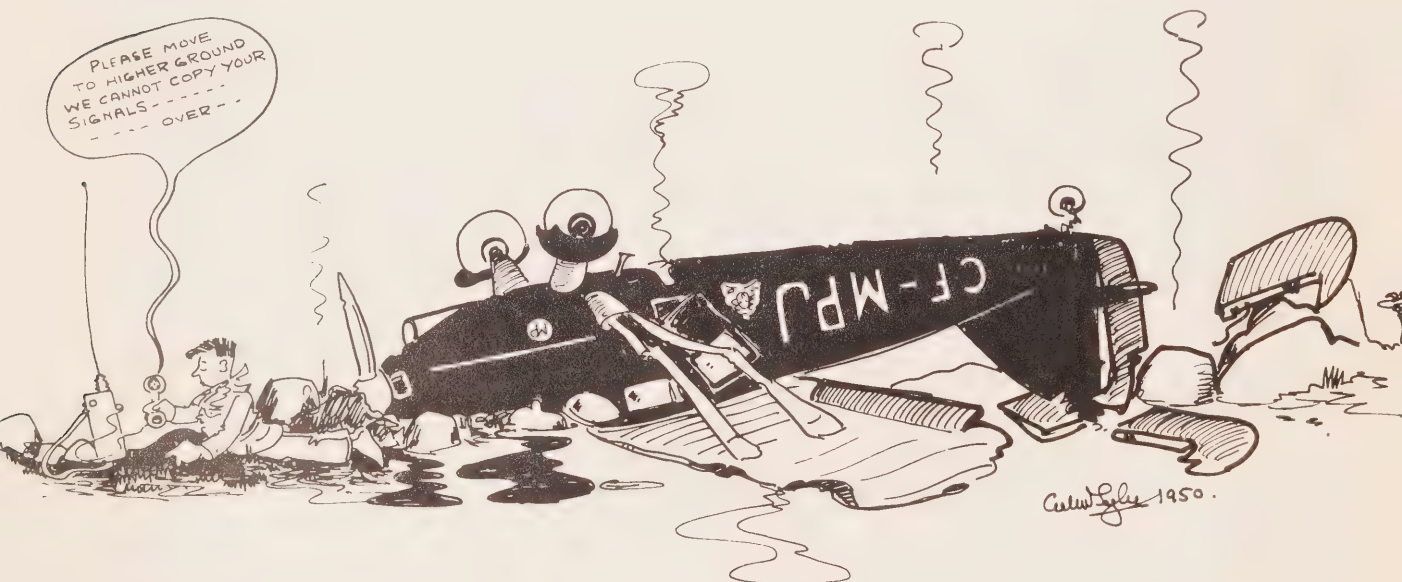
However, the next year the Stinson craft was involved in two "mishaps". One when it landed in a field of summer fallow and turned over on its back, and the other during a gale at Fort Walsh, Saskatchewan when a similar accident occurred. No injuries of personnel resulted.

In keeping with its present-day functions the Section was, and still is, involved in the operation of carrying out such duties as emergency flights, northern and regional inspection patrols, preventive service work, transporting prisoners, personnel and northern supplies, searches for missing or escaped persons and a host of related duties.

By 1953 the "Air" Section's operations were extensive. Nine detachments were deployed throughout the regular divisions with a total of nine operational aircraft.



Drawn by Insp. "Tam" Taylor — Pilot S/Sgt. S. S. Rothwell





C/Supt. D. W. Dawson

In this same year the command of the Division was taken over by Inspector (later C/Supt.) D. W. Dawson who had been with the Division since it was reformed in 1946.

Inspector Dawson had a distinguished record with the R.C.A.F. Training Command during the Second War and held the Air Force Cross.

Over 600,000 miles had been logged by the nine aircraft in 1953. Working in conjunction with the land force flights have been made for such purposes as patrolling the Canadian-United

States border on preventive service duties and the buffer zone in Saskatchewan that was set up to combat the spreading hoof and mouth disease.

Twelve months later the Division had increased its cross-Canada detachments. Added to the list were the communities of Fort Smith, N.W.T.; Prince Albert, Saskatchewan and St. John's, Newfoundland.

A Commissioner's Report year ending March 31st, 1954 says the service of the Division had yet again expanded. "They included the conducting of aerial searches for lost persons, escaped prisoners, wanted criminals, stricken vessels in coastal waters and occasionally stolen livestock and automobiles."

A typical example of the use of aircraft is easily portrayed in the case of "Willie Petersen, missing Prospector – Barkerville, B.C." who was found after being lost in the mountains for a week. A police aircraft, with experienced Game Wardens aboard, searched for and found Petersen. The aircraft couldn't land at the spot due to the rugged terrain so a ground party was sent in under the direction of the aircraft's pilot.

From 1955 to 1959 the number of detachments in Canada increased from ten to twelve and the "Air" Section was established as a Service Division. The tenth detachment was opened at Churchill, Manitoba, and the new craft sent to the area was an Otter purchased in 1954, which proved invaluable in assisting the Department of Northern Affairs and in the various operations of the Force in northern Districts of Keewatin, N.W.T.

In February of 1955, the Otter played a primary role in the rescue of the crew of a U.S.A.F. Stratojet which exploded at 35,000 feet over northern Saskatchewan. Three of the four mem-



DeHavilland DHC-3 Otter — “A rugged plane for tough terrain”

bers of the stricken craft parachuted to safety.

The Otter was responsible for rescuing two of the three crew members after they had been located by air search and rescue teams. The third member, having been rescued by a civilian plane was flown from Cumberland House to the hospital in The Pas, Manitoba. Remains of the fourth member of the crew were evacuated, by the Otter, from the scene of the wreckage.

From the Canadian Aviation Historical Society in its Journal No. 4, Winter 1968: “. . . remarkable repairs have been effected in the field”. It goes on to say an aircraft that had landed hard on treacherous ice, west of Hudson Bay severely deformed its fuselage. This spurred the R.C.M.P. engineers to use a similar machine and fabricate a special brace to strengthen the damaged fuselage, and then fly to the crash site and camp out in 30° below zero weather to install

the brace. Following a week of strenuous work, the damaged machine was capable of flying back for more permanent repairs at Churchill.

Otter CF-MPP, flying from Churchill to Ottawa for major overhaul, cracked a cylinder in the engine and from 3,000 feet Cpl. Gordie Carter made what is known as a “dead stick” landing on Highway 11, about 20 miles from North Bay, Ontario.

None of the plane’s seven passengers were injured and shortly after the landing mechanics arrived on the scene from Rockcliffe with another engine. Battling the stormy weather and bitter cold the repairs were carried out on the side of the road, and two days later the plane rolled down the Highway and into the air to continue its journey.

One fatal accident occurred in August of 1958 when the Vancouver based deHavilland Beaver

crashed into a hillside near Kamloops, B.C. while flying low over rough terrain searching for the suspected murderer of a young girl. The pilot, Staff Sergeant S. S. Rothwell, air technician Special Constable J. E. R. Cormier and one land branch member, Constable R. W. Green were killed. The plane was destroyed.

This was the first of two fatal crashes in the "Air" Division's history.

Members of the Division have carried out many rescue operations one of which took place when in August 1956 it was revealed there was the wreckage of an R.C.A.F. Digby aircraft (R.C.A.F. 739) in Newfoundland.

The craft had gone down some fourteen years before in World War II on an anti-submarine mission. The Division's St. John's, Newfoundland based Beaver CF-MPN, made many journeys into the remote area, 20 miles east of Port



August 1957 on the shores of Quidi Vidi Lake, Newfoundland.
S/Sgt. M. W. Ney and S/Cst. C. M. Ross —
"Keeping those birds in the air"

8 May, 1958 — "A job well done"



"TRANSPO-73"

- 1 King Air
- 2 Twin Otter
- 3 Turbo Beaver
- 4 Beaver
- 5 Otter
- 6 Grumman Goose
- 7 Bell 212



4



3



5



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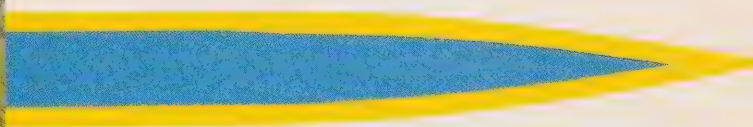
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7



Saunders in the Long Range Mountains, to bring out remains of the crew and to destroy the unexploded depth charges the craft carried.

This same Beaver also made trips into Port Burwell, N.W.T. when it was found there were starving Eskimos in the locality. Three hundred pounds of food were brought in and a young

Eskimo girl was also flown out to receive medical attention at Fort Chimo, P.Q.

Another incident included a York aircraft, owned by Transair Ltd., which crashed near Rankin Inlet on a flight to Churchill. The craft sent out a distress call which was picked up by an Otter on the way to Eskimo Point with an expectant mother on board.

On the return trip the Otter landed on ice near the burning wreckage of the York, and three crew members were picked up and flown back to Rankin Inlet.

Again, this same Otter, carrying a collapsible boat, rescued 65-year-old C. C. Crossley marooned on an ice floe after forced landing a Norseman he was ferrying south. The Otter landed on solid ice and the crew dragged the collapsible boat across two miles of snow to the ice edge, from whence they paddled to Crossley's floe. The party with the rescued man returned safely to Coral Harbour.

In May 1957, the Grumman Goose flew to the Queen Charlotte Islands with Demo Experts on board to explode a Japanese mine which had drifted across the Pacific and had landed in an inlet. Today the machine is based on the west coast and is currently in its 26th year of operation with the Force.

Along with the "Air" Division's many other impressive features its aircraft have been in some remote areas, and include some of the farthest northern flights. In the earlier days the Norseman, CF-MPL based at Fort Smith had made the furthest northerly point by reaching Sachs Harbour on the west side of Banks Island at latitude 72 degrees north.

It was one of the most northerly patrols at that time (1955), further than any other land-based, single-engined, civil registered aircraft





An Otter landing in the high Arctic

had reached, under its own steam, and returned. Later in 1955 CF-MPP managed a flight which reached Arctic Bay on the west tip of Baffin Island almost at 74 degrees north latitude.

Operations during 1960 were reasonably normal in nature and consisted mainly of transporting passengers and freight into the remote areas of Canada, where it was in the interest of economy and efficiency to do so. An example is one completed by an aircraft in the Eastern Arctic which departed from its base in Frobisher Bay on March 5th and returned March 18th, after stops in Igloolik, Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, Grise Fiord, Alexandra, Eureka, Thule (Greenland) and Resolute Bay.

The pilot, Sergeant (later Insp.) R. L. Fletcher, who managed the route chalked up a steady 5,275 air miles, and he carried out establishing dog patrol food caches, game patrols, transferring personnel and making flights available into the more remote areas. Investigations were also carried out to determine the living conditions of the natives.

Misfortune struck one aircraft Beaver MPQ while it was in the hangar at Regina's base November 4th, 1959. The hangar caught fire and

the aircraft was destroyed. The exact cause of the fire was never determined, however, a faulty heater in the hangar was highly suspected.

In the Commissioner's Report for 1960 there is a reference saying "due to the heavy demand for the use of aircraft throughout the Force, training of flying personnel had to be restricted. In March 1960, a surplus of National Defence aircraft acquired were ex-R.C.A.F. Expeditors converted to the civilian configuration of Beechcraft 18's, and it is expected that our training problems will be resolved in the forthcoming year. These were registered as CF-MPA, CF-MPB and CF-MPC.

Like most organizations, the "Air" Division had a color scheme for its machines, and originally, except for the Beechcraft all aircraft had blue fuselages and yellow horizontal stabilizer, yellow rudder, wings and fuselage speed-line.

The lettering on the wings was the same blue as the fuselage, and other colour specifications varied from metal to fabric covered surfaces and were generally in the same framework.

In later years the aircraft were usually left in a polished, natural, all-metal finish, unless operating in a corrosive environment such as the



**DEDICATED
TO
THE MEMORY OF**

1966 SGT. K.M. LAUGHLAND
19626 CPL. R.W. ASBIL
19670 CST. P.L.A. MALCOLM
19296 CST. W.J.D. ANNAND

OF THE
YUKON SUBDIVISION
WHO DIED WHILST ON DUTY
IN THE CRASH OF
R.C.M.P. AIRCRAFT CF-MP20
AT CARMACKS, YUKON,
JUNE 13, 1964.

coastal areas, in which case the blue and yellow scheme was adhered to.

By 1962, the Division had 18 aircraft based throughout Canada, and by this time each was equipped with radio communications to contact police cars and ground stations. Assistance was also given within the year to spot forest fires, and in some cases lend a hand to ground personnel.

The second fatal accident struck the Division in 1964 when a deHavilland Beaver aircraft based at Whitehorse, Y.T. was carrying out investigations in the Carmacks area in the Yukon. Upon landing at Carmacks the aircraft crashed and was destroyed by fire. Dead were the pilot, Sergeant K. M. Laughland, Cpl. R. W. Asbil, Constables P. L. A. Malcolm and W. J. D. Annand and a prisoner. A cairn has been erected at Carmacks as well as a plaque on the flagstaff in Whitehorse to honour these men who gave their lives in the performance of their duties.

DeHavilland Beaver



During the mid-sixties some very important changes began to take place within the Division. The Division itself was divided into two "Sub/Divisions" namely Eastern "Air" Sub/Division and Western "Air" Sub/Division. Western "Air" Sub/Division was to include all "Air" detachments in the N.W.T. and the Yukon with the exception of Frobisher Bay which would come under the direct control of Eastern "Air" Sub/Division.

In August of 1966, CF-MPQ, a deHavilland Beaver, was purchased for the sole use of the Crime Detection Laboratory in Regina. The aircraft proved to be a valuable asset to the Laboratory personnel and many hours of driving by car were saved by the use of the machine. Bulky exhibits for court purposes that were difficult and sometimes impossible to transport by car were easily handled by the Beaver.

In October of the same year, CF-MPA, a Beechcraft 18, was totally destroyed in a hangar fire at its Edmonton base. Replacement of this aircraft was to be the beginning of a new era for the "Air" Division. CF-VMH, a Beechcraft King Air, was purchased in the spring of 1967 and was to prove invaluable during Canada's Centennial Year.

The King Air was, to date, the most sophisticated aircraft to be used by the Air Division personnel. With its fast cruising speed, turbo-prop engines, pressurization, all weather flight capabilities and advanced navigation and communication radio aids the aircraft was indeed a "pilot's airplane".

Two new detachments were also opened during 1966, these being Prince Rupert, B.C. and The Pas, Manitoba. These areas had, prior to this time, not had the benefit of an aircraft and due to the rugged terrain of both areas, especially



Beechcraft Kingair A90

Prince Rupert, their services proved extremely beneficial.

The Commissioner's Report for the year ending March 31st, 1966 indicated that the Division had again surpassed the previous year in air miles travelled and hours flown. It further stated that nearly 400 hours were allotted for the purposes of crew training.

The Division was to suffer a setback during the year when many of the personnel were lost to other flying positions, most of which were with commercial airlines or the Department of Transport. Flying operations at some detachments were curtailed and at others had to be

temporarily suspended until proper advanced training could be given to the replacement crews. Crews were trained and the situation rectified in a very short time, however, and operations returned to normal.

Canada's Centennial Year, 1967, was to be one of the busiest years ever for the aircraft and crews of "Air" Division. The newly acquired King Air was to be on 24-hour standby to transport members of the Force to various places in Canada and the United States on many diverse duties.

Security, of course, was to be one of the major problems encountered by the Force due to the number of Foreign Heads-of-State and diplomats visiting Canada during the year. Expo '67 was to further draw on the Force's services because of the number of countries operating pavilions there.

In July of 1967 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II visited Expo '67 and "Air" Division was to supply all aerial security for her and her party both over the Expo site and over the Royal Yacht Britannia. Two deHavilland Beavers were assigned to the job and four crews working on alternate shifts, would keep one aircraft on the designated location nearly 24 hours a day.

Flight restrictions, except for security aircraft, prohibited any aircraft from flying within 3 miles horizontally or 4,000 feet vertically of the Royal Party and on more than one occasion an over-zealous private plane had to be "buzzed" and waved off to remind them of the restrictions.

For many years the Ontario Provincial Police had been enforcing the Highway Traffic Act by the use of aircraft. Aerial enforcement had proven to be highly successful and in the summer of 1967 the "Air" Division commenced a "trial" program.

Various sections of the highway adjacent to Regina were marked at quarter mile intervals and observed from the aircraft, speeders could be timed over these sections and their speed determined. Once the speed of the vehicle had been noted the observer in the aircraft would contact a patrol car on the ground and the appropriate summons or warning issued. Other violations were easily observed from the air, such as failing to stop at stop signs and passing on solid white lines.

This type of enforcement received favourable comments from the members on traffic and indications were that the aircraft was instrumental in cutting down on the number of accidents in the area.

In the fall of the same year CF-MPQ, based in Regina, assisted in the apprehension of two men wanted in connection with an armed robbery in the Lestock district of Saskatchewan.

The Beaver had departed from Regina for Prince Albert, a distance of some 200 miles but had to divert to Yorkton en route to pick up an additional prisoner for the Prince Albert Gaol.

Shortly after takeoff from the Yorkton Airport a call was received to proceed to Lestock and assist in the search for the two men. A search was carried out for some five hours until low fuel forced the aircraft to return to its initial point, Regina.

Upon landing at Regina a female prisoner, who had reluctantly boarded the aircraft earlier in the day, was heard to remark, "What kind of airplane is this?" "I fly all day in this thing and we're still in Regina!"

The two men, although not spotted by the aircraft had been unable to move from their hiding place near the scene of the crime because of the ever-circling Beaver and were ar-



DeHavilland Turbo Beaver over Peace River — Fall 1971

rested upon being located by a ground search party.

Early in 1968 another milestone was reached in "Air" Division when CF-MPA a deHavilland Turbo-Beaver, was purchased by the Force.

The Turbo-Beaver, an advanced version of the standard Beaver, was to be posted to Peace River, Alberta.

This was the first "bush-utility" type aircraft to be operated by the Division that was equipped with a turbine engine, giving it increased engine power over the standard Beaver as well as an increase in seating capacity from 7 seats to 11 seats.

The Turbo-Beaver was designed to operate from short, unprepared strips utilizing a fully reversible propeller. CF-MPA has assisted in numerous searches for lost hunters, many of whom were located during night searches where the missing party's fire was spotted.

In the summer of 1968 the Turbo-Beaver, flown by Staff Sergeant John Demeriez, rendered valuable assistance in the capture of a suspected murderer along the Alaska Highway in northern B.C., especially in the transportation of investigating members of the Force to and from the scene.

Superintendent J. H. "Wing" Reid (later Chief Superintendent) took over the reins of the "Air" Division in the fall of 1969.

Superintendent Reid was a veteran of many years with the Force and had also served with the R.C.A.F. during the Second World War.

In the early spring of 1969 the most modern of the Division's aircraft was delivered. CF-MPB, a deHavilland Twin-Otter, was posted to Fort Smith, N.W.T. Again utilizing the turbine engines the Twin-Otter had short field capabilities, a relatively fast cruising speed (175 knots) and could carry a payload of 4,000 lbs.

CF-MPB was painted white with a blue and yellow speedline along the fuselage with blue wings and horizontal stabilizer. This colour scheme was to be adopted for all "Air" Division aircraft in the near future.

CF-MPB was called upon to supply transport for a number of visiting dignitaries during its first year of operation, the first of whom was Prime Minister Trudeau, who made an extensive tour of the Northwest Territories early in 1969.

In July of 1970, the Division was further honoured when it was called upon to supply transportation for part of the Royal Family's tour of the Northwest Territories.



The New and the Old — CF-MPB — RCMP's First Twin Otter at Rockcliffe

Queen Elizabeth, Prince Philip and a party of fourteen were flown from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk under fairly adverse weather conditions.

During the stop in Tuktoyaktuk the Captain of the Queen's Flight presented the crew's log books to the Royal Party who graciously consented to enter their signatures. Captain of the Twin-Otter, S/Sgt. George Filiatrault, and his crew were indeed honoured!

The Twin-Otter was then rushed to Fort Smith where it again was to take part in the tour. Prince Philip and Prince Charles were transported to Pine Point and Yellowknife en route witnessing the awesome beauty of a raging forest fire. Prince Charles and Princess Anne were later transported from Yellowknife to Fort Providence where their initiation to the North

was complete when they were greeted with hordes of the famous northern black flies.

The final duty for the crew and aircraft was to fly Prince Charles from Norway House to Swan River to reunite with the rest of the Royal Party. The Prince's interest in aviation and in particular, the Twin-Otter, was noticed by his numerous queries en route.

The flights with the Royal Party were the highlights in many of the crews' careers and have been the topic of conversation on numerous occasions since.

It was obvious from the new Twin-Otter's performance that it would be an excellent replacement for the single-engined Otters now being operated in the northern areas. It was further indicated that the Beechcraft 18's now

EXTRACT FROM FLYING LOG BOOK OF INSP. A.P. DYE RCMP ROYAL TOUR N.W.T. & MANITOBA 1970

YEAR 1970		AIRCRAFT		PILOT, OR 1ST PILOT	2ND PILOT, PUPIL OR PASSENGER	DUTY (INCLUDING RESULTS AND REMARKS)
MONTH	DATE	Type	No.			
						TOTALS BROUGHT FORWARD
July	5	TWIN OTTER	MPB	SELF	FILIA TRAVLT	- INUVIK
July	6	" "	"	FILIA TRAVLT	SELF	- Tuktoyaktuk.
July	7	TWIN OTTER	MPB	FILIA TRAVLT	SELF.	- INUVIK
July	7	" "	"	FILIA TRAVLT	SELF	- FORT GOOD HOPE - NORMAN WELLS
July	7	" "	"	SELF	FILIA TRAVLT	- YELLOWKNIFE - FORT SMITH
July	8	" "	"	FILIA TRAVLT	SELF	- PINE POINT
July	8	" "	"	"	"	- YELLOWKNIFE
July	9	" "	"	"	"	- PROVIDENCE
July	9	TWIN OTTER	MPB	FILIA TRAVLT	SELF	- YELLOWKNIFE
July	9	" "	"	SELF	FILIA TRAVLT	- THE PAS
July	9	" "	"	FILIA TRAVLT	SELF	- DRUPHIN
July	10	" "	"	"	"	- THOMPSON
July	10	" "	"	SELF	FILIA TRAVLT	- CHURCHILL
July	10	" "	"	SELF	SELF	- THOMPSON
July	11	" "	"	SELF	FILIA TRAVLT	- NORWAY HOUSE
July	11	" "AIR"	COMMODORE	Captain of The Queen's Flight		SUBAR RIVER

GRAND TOTAL [Cols. (1) to (10)]

Hrs. Mins.

TOTALS CARRIED FORWARD

being operated out of some of the larger southern centres had become obsolete due to their small payload (six passengers versus the 21 of the Twin-Otter) and to the ever-increasing costs to keep them in the air.

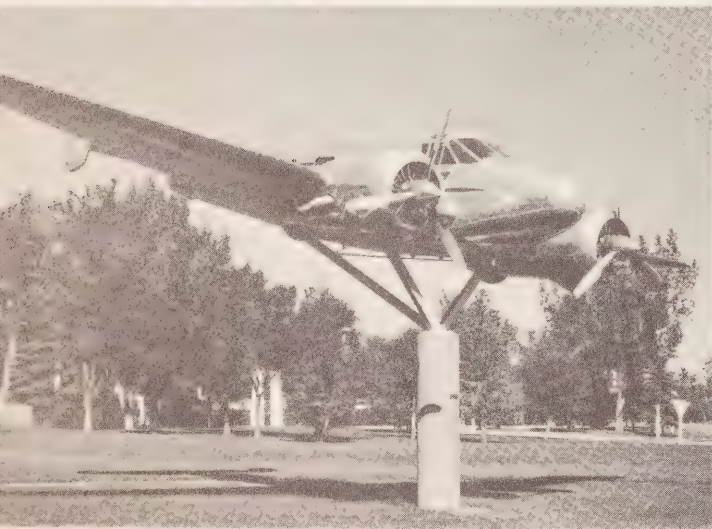
The Beechcraft, that had rendered so many years of faithful service, were simply wearing out.

After many months of negotiations and presentations to the various Government departments approval was finally received for the purchase of five additional Twin-Otters. These aircraft were delivered in June and July of 1971



4 of our 6 Twin Otters in Yellowknife — 1972

"Gracefully surrendering the things of youth"



and were posted to Regina, Edmonton, Frobisher Bay and Inuvik. The fifth Twin-Otter, scheduled for posting to Whitehorse, was placed on temporary duty in British Columbia, prior to its move north.

The Beechcraft 18's with the exception of CF-MPI, that was used for advanced flight training, were finally "put out to pasture". CF-MPH, the first "18" operated by the Force was donated to the R.C.M.P. Museum in Regina and there maintains "perpetual" flight high on a cement pedestal.

As previously noted, the fifth Twin-Otter delivered, was posted to British Columbia where a scheduled run was set up five days a week.

The scheduled run was from Vancouver to various points in B.C. including some of the most northerly. The main reason for the run was to transport members on investigational duties and to escort prisoners to the gaols on the lower mainland.

The run was continued from July to September and was found to be a huge success, saving



Bell 212 Helicopter — CF-MPZ — “A step in the right direction”

many thousands of dollars in air fares and unknown thousands of man-hours.

Upon completion of the trial period the aircraft was sent to Regina, Saskatchewan and CF-MPL, another Twin-Otter based in Regina at that time, was transferred to Whitehorse.

A near-tragedy occurred in Newfoundland in November of the same year when a single-engined Otter, CF-MPZ piloted by Staff Sergeant Don Klancher, suffered an engine failure over rough bush country and had to force-land.

Fortunately, the pilot and passengers escaped with only very minor injuries, however, shortly after they had evacuated the aircraft it was totally destroyed by fire. The crew and passengers were able to make their way to a camp located nearby and spent the night and at first light the next morning rescue aircraft were on the scene to transport them back to civilization.

The Division had, for some time, been trying to obtain a helicopter and with the loss of the single Otter were able to buy, in the form of a replacement aircraft, a Bell 212.

The Bell 212 was yet another landmark in the history of the “Air” Division, being the first helicopter to be operated by the Force. The Bell had twin engine safety, a large payload and was ideally suited for the rough, poor weather country of the coastal areas of Newfoundland.

A problem arose in the picking of crews for the helicopter as no “Air” Division pilots at that time were fully qualified to operate this type of equipment. The problem was soon rectified when two ex-members of the Force, with suitable qualifications, rejoined the ranks.

This year as we observe the Centennial of the Force and look back on the past 36 years service, we find that the Air Division has enjoyed a steady growth and an ever improving record of achievement.

Methods may change as more sophisticated equipment is developed, however the aims and objectives of the R.C.M. Police Air Division has always remained, to provide safe, efficient support service to the overall operation of the Force.

Modern Turbine Aircraft, thorough training and increased exposure to the diverse obligations the Division is charged to undertake has manifested itself in one of the best safety records in North America.

The day of "flying by the seat of your pants" and estimating airspeed from the whistling wind through the wires, has faded into history. Today aircrews are encouraged to update their qualifications and all Air Division pilots work toward or hold Airline Transport licences and Class 1 Instrument tickets. Courses in survival, turbine operations and advanced navigation techniques are all included in a member's training.

Each year has shown an increase in productivity, with passenger mileage and ton miles flown rising steadily, and today there is no corner of Canada, regardless of how remote

that has not witnessed the arrival of the R.C.M.P. in their own aircraft.

The diversity of the operation, from bush flying in the far north to executive flying in some of the most congested and active airways in North America, make flying with the Force a challenging career for the members of the Division.

Many of the Air Detachments are based in the more remote areas of the country and often members are required to spend many long periods away from home in the performance of their duties. It is as much through the moral support and patience of the Air Division wives, as the work and efforts of the members themselves, that has molded the Air Division into the effective transport system envisaged by Commissioner MacBrien forty years ago.

R.C.M.P. "Air" Division Pilots and Engineers 1973

"AIR" DIVISION PILOTS



C/Supt. J.H. Reid



Supt. G.R. Hamelin



Supt. A.F. Dye



Insp. R.L. Fletcher



Insp. N. Brisbin



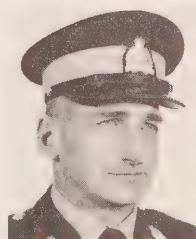
S/Sgt. B.M. Thomson



S/Sgt. E.H. Wright



S/Sgt. R.J. Haddad



S/Sgt. R.J.H. Demeriez



S/Sgt. A.C. Clark



S/Sgt. C.R.J. Filiatrault



S/Sgt. N.M. Melsness



S/Sgt. N.A. Saunders



S/Sgt. D.A. Collard



S/Sgt. R.D. Saunders



S/Sgt. R.P. Birks



S. Sgt. P.A. Kember



S/Sgt. R.G.M. Hayden



S/Sgt. N.C. Muffitt



S/Sgt. W.G. Stewart



S/Sgt. R.L. Ayers



S. Sgt. D.J. Klancher



S. Sgt. A.D. Hudson



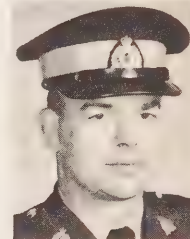
S/Sgt. D.I. MacKenzie



S/Sgt. J.M. Van Norman



Sgt. K.G. Gschwind



Sgt. L.D. Hickey



Sgt. L.A. MacCulloch



Sgt. H.D. Gillespie



Cpl. N.R. Cross



Cpl. D.R.A. Harris



Cpl. A.L. Sabey



Cpl. J.M.A. Leslie



Sgt. J.D. Hayes



S/Sgt. D.I. McKay



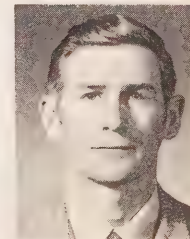
Cst. L.F.W. Kendel



Cst. G.C. McIver



Cst. H.G. Leslie

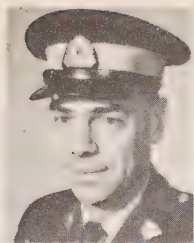


Cst. T.K. Vickers

"AIR" DIVISION
ENGINEERS



Supt. M.W. Ney



S/Cst. D.E. Hancock



S/Cst. R.F. Chapin



S/Cst. L.E. Fowler



S/Cst. A.A. Garvin



S/Cst. C.M. Ross



S/Cst. G.E.L. Bartlett



S/Cst. B.K. Lace



S/Cst. C.A. Cowherd



S/Cst. A.A.S. White



S/Cst. E.P. Austen



S/Cst. A.E. Nilsson



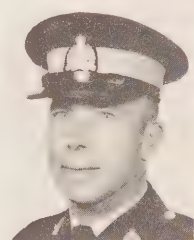
S/Cst. D.P. McNab



S Cst. I.G. Owen



S/Cst. H.S. Wiltzen



S Cst. J.G.E. Walker



S Sgt. C.E. Freeman



S Cst. G.R. Brown



S Cst. M.O. Stene



S/Cst. S.L. Carmichael



S/Cst. D.L. Manley



S/Cst. D.G. MacAuley



S/Cst. D.W. Davidson



Cpl. W.J. Mohr



S/Cst. T.W. Manning



S/Cst. J.P. Power



S/Cst. P.L. Langevin



S/Cst. R.J. Fields



S Cst. R.G. Vezina

R.C.M.P. "Air" Division Pilots and Engineers/1937-1973

"AIR" DIVISION PILOTS

1937	Sgt. T.R. Michelson	1959	Sgt. R.I.H. Demeretz
1937	Sgt. R.H. Barker	17457	Sgt. P.R. Smith
1937	Sgt. G.F. Hart	18405	Sgt. A.C. Clark
1937	Sgt. M.P. Fraser	1960	
1937	Sgt. L. Dubuc	18621	Sgt. W.W. Kittle
1938		1961	
1296	Sgt. P.B. Cox	18702	Sgt. W. McMurphy
2835	Sgt. H.F. McClellan	1962	
2466	Sgt. D.W. Dawson	18665	Sgt. G.R.I. Filiatrault
1946		18282	Sgt. H.H. Lass
1297	Sgt. R.F. Holtom	1963	
377	Sgt. H.A. Heacock	18780	Sgt. J.E.M. Easton
1304	Sgt. D.W. Mills	18923	Sgt. N.M. Melsness
1947		1965	
1949		19210	
1950		19884	
1952		20996	
1953		20198	
1954		1966	
1955		20077	Sgt. R.P. Birks
1956		20077	Sgt. W.G. Stewart
1957		22735	Sgt. P.A. Kember
1958		22729	Sgt. D.J. Klancher
1959		22825	Sgt. A.D. Hudson
1960		27442	Sgt. J.R.N. Campeau
1961		27711	Sgt. N.C. Muflitt
1962		27777	Sgt. R.L. Avers
1963		27777	Sgt. R.G.M. Havden
1964		27777	Sgt. D.J. MacKenzie
1965		1967	
1966		22593	Sgt. J.M. Van Norman
1967		23607	Sgt. L.D. Hickey
1968		22499	Sgt. K.I.G. Gschwind
1969		1968	
1970		21862	Sgt. L.A. MacCulloch
1971		21932	Sgt. H.D. Gillespie
1972		1970	
1973		23263	Sgt. N.R. Cross
1974		1971	
1975		23051	
1976		24787	
1977		27577	
1978		1972	
1979		17777	
1980		2	
1981		1973	
1982		27777	Sgt. G.R. McIver
1983		27777	Sgt. L.F.W. Kendel
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'LOST' TRAPPER SPOTTED



First Contact In Six Wintry Weeks

NELSON, B.C. (CP)—RCMP said Thursday they may have spotted from the air one of two trapper brothers who have not been heard from in six weeks.

FIRST TRAPPING TRIP

The two Helgren brothers, Cedon and Edward, 23, entered the Duncan river valley 50 miles north

Plane Helps Nab Suspect

Fleeing Youth Spotted From

The Air

An RCMP aircraft and patrol cars combined Tuesday through radio hookup to apprehend in one hour and 15 minutes a 15-year-old armed holdup suspect at Oak Point.

Police said they were notified at that Horace Clegg, Oak Point farmer, had been robbed and holding

**RCMP'S SURVIVAL SKILLS
KEEP 7 ALIVE FOUR DAYS
AS ARCTIC GALES SHRIEK**

Police Rescue 2 After 48 Hours By Downed Plane

Special To The Journal

RAE, N.W.T. — Two men were found Saturday night after they spent more than 48 hours beside their downed aeroplane, about 100 miles northwest of Yellowknife.

John Shead, 28, the pilot, and Arnuls Steinwand, 25, both of Rae, 50 miles northwest of Yellowknife, were reported in good condition after they were picked up by a ski-equipped RCMP plane.

They had spent two days huddled under the canvas engine cover of

RCMP Pilot Rescues Trio From Treacherous Floe

